

1080-6-22
A
S K E T C H
OF THE
R I G H T S
OF
BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY LAUNCELOT LIGHT,
OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL;

AND
LÆTITIA LOOKABOUT,
OF QUEEN'S SQUARE, BLOOMSBURY.

PART THE FIRST.

We 'll force you, by right ratiocination,
To leave your vililitigation;
And make you keep to th' question close,
And argue dialecticās.

HUDIBRAS.

L O N D O N :
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OF THE GENERAL RIGHTS OF BOYS.

THANKS be to these enlightened times, when prejudice of every kind is vanishing before the natural light of reason aided by true philosophy,—when the musty axioms which ignorance first founded, which tyranny since has propagated, which have been implicitly obeyed by cowards and by fools, cease to be revered as irrefragable. Oh! Mr. Paine, what do we not owe you? It was reserved for your daring and ardent spirit to set the experience of past ages at manly defiance; and by the pure splendor of your COMMON SENSE to out-blaze the tiny and feeble rays of what has hitherto been called moral and political philosophy.



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Yes, Boys have certainly their appropriate RIGHTS; and may no longer servilely endure the galling stripes which, till now, our flesh was heir to. But I will not wantonly consume the valuable hours of my contemporaries by indulging the mighty ardour which occupies my youthful bosom. Doubtless, my fellow Boys must all be impatient to have their RIGHTS perspicuously defined, so that in all future and possible emergencies they may act in their particular spheres with becoming energy and fortitude. To enter then at once upon my subject, systematically and judiciously, as Mr. Paley has done in modern times, and the great Gavina in former ones.

Rights are perfect and imperfect.

First, of perfect Rights.

Boys must unquestionably have a PERFECT RIGHT to what the majority of them, upon whatever occasion, and in whatever place assembled, shall *determine* to be expedient.

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This idea of the will of the majority constituting RIGHT is so obviously wise, so consistent with the fitness of things, and so essential to the happiness of *Boy-kind*, that it seems wonderful in the extreme how so many ages can have rolled away without its being revered as the first great principle of action.

But thus it was precisely in the example of balloons. Every morning when we boiled our kettles we might have learned something of the nature of gas and phlogiston, by seeing bodies ascend in the column of smoke; yet when the first balloon rose to the firmament we gazed with unutterable astonishment, and thought the Devil must be in it. In like manner, though it has been allowed as a truism since the deluge, and probably before it, that two heads are better than one; yet it was reserved for an *honest*, honest American of the eighteenth century to vindicate from all cavil and objection the sober position, that the will of the majority *must*

be obeyed. This then is our first and great Right, from which an infinite number of lesser Rights are deducible, like so many corollaries from the forty seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid. Of these I shall animadvert on a few.

Boys must necessarily have a perfect Right to learn what they think proper, and nothing else.

This Right is inseparably connected with our free will. Free will is the great and honourable distinction of man as an animal. If this attribute of our nature be counteracted in the juvenile mind, if it be not allowed to strengthen with our strength and grow with our growth, what shall we be at maturer years but organized machines? Our reasoning faculties hoodwinked, our capacity of judgement vitiated and enfeebled in its source, the fire of genius restrained, and all the man degraded.

Boys

Boys have likewise a perfect right to choose their own situations and professions in life. This also seems too plain to be contradicted; but least it should, the following, among other strong reasons which crowd upon my mind, cannot surely fail of satisfying the most incredulous. A parent (it is the observation of Mr. Paley) has no RIGHT to destroy his child's happiness. This being conceded, my position is certain and indisputable. If I shall choose to be of a genteel profession (which most undoubtedly I shall), and my parents or guardians endeavour to compel me to follow that of a base and servile mechanic, what is this but an insult to my free will, and destroying my happiness? Boys must consequently choose their professional situations.

Not to extend this chapter to an undue and impertinent length, these conclusions are the natural and logical result of the above clear and incontrovertible **premises**.

That

That all the RIGHTS of Boys are perfect RIGHTS: that the RIGHTS which parents, guardians, and masters, have hitherto assumed in exercising jurisdiction and authority over youths, are IMPERFECT: as they are *imperfect* they may be questioned; and as far as they seem incompatible with our happiness, may be resisted. By the way, in the present highly improved and improving state of things, my judgement and reasoning powers are far from being satisfied that either parents or masters are altogether necessary. One of the wisest, most accomplished, and best skilled in the knowledge of human nature, amongst the ancients, was of opinion that at least parents were not; and boldly appeals, in vindication of his assertion, to the strong testimony of historical fact.

Thus I read in Horace.

Multos sæpe viros nullis majoribus ortos
Et vixisse probos amplis et honoribus auctos.

Nullis majoribus, if I have not arrived at the shell in Westminster without some portion
of

of learning, means born of no father, or men who had no fathers. To give the meaning of the entire sentence literally and without amplification—"Often have many men, who had no fathers, both lived honest and been promoted to great honours."

Here then is an example introduced as a sort of moral apophthegm by an illustrious writer, and without any mark of admiration or astonishment, but as if it was a common incident, that it is not physically necessary for men to have fathers. This idea receives farther corroboration from the pen of the immortal Virgil, who tells us, in his "Georgics," that the mare was often impregnated without the interposition of the horse, but that she received certain elementary particles, containing the principles of generation, through the medium of the Western wind. I need not cite the passage; it is familiar enough. I presume that the text in Horace is correct, and that I have given its fair and natural interpretation. All the manuscripts which I have had the opportunity of consulting war-

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rant the above reading : if I after all shall be mistaken, I will readily and thankfully attend to any hints which Heyne or Rhunkenius, who will both of them doubtless read this book, may chuse to send me on this subject ; that is, provided their letters shall come postage free, for I have not much allowance ; the more shame, say I ; nor am I yet certain that we shall sell as many copies of this publication as Doddsley did of Mr. Burke's pamphlet.

Again, with respect to masters, those, to my poor apprehension, seem still less necessary. It would be trifling with my readers of all ages (for readers of all ages I shall indisputably have) to expatiate tediously on this question. One plain argument is at the same time both obvious and unanswerable. Has it not been undeservedly acknowledged, since the commencement of things, that they who have been most distinguished by profound erudition and the most exalted talents, the most brilliant poets, the most eminent painters, the most ingenious mechanicks, the most

most solid politicians (Mr. Paine, for example), have been found amongst those who, disdaining the controul of teachers, and the drudgery of disciples, have been literally *self-taught*?

But it is time that I should resign my pen to my cousin Lætitia, with very little doubt but that she will delight and astonish her readers, as I presume to have done, by the force of her argument, the fire of her imagination, and acuteness of her wit, to say nothing of a certain facile manner of expression which she inherits from her mother and grandmother.

OF THE GENERAL RIGHTS OF GIRLS.

YES, as my dear cousin Lancelot says, I doubt not but I shall make my part good ; and not my own part also, but that of all the sisterhood. Many thanks to Mrs. Mary with the hard German name—I shall think of it before I have done with her. She has provided us with some original and delightful ideas on the importance, dignity, and privileges, of the sex. Her book is indeed now and then a little queer, she having a peculiar way of calling black black, and white white ; but the “ Essay on the Rights of Women ” certainly abounds with many sober truths, upon which we cannot meditate

tate too frequently. Why indeed, as she observes, should we be kept in ignorance under the specious name of innocence? We ought doubtless to know every thing, and the sooner the better. But I hasten to arrange my ideas.

Let this therefore, from the first moment that we become capable of thinking, be assumed by all young women as a *datum*, which Lance says, who, bless him, is always ready enough to instruct my ignorance, means a given thing—that girls are to be women, probably wives, and must strive at least to be mistresses.

What a large field of Rights is here displayed for female ambition to enjoy, female policy to regulate, and female sagacity to ascertain! If we do not define these *in limine* that is, as cousin Lance instructs me to say upon the threshold of our mansion, how may, and how will invaders, under the hateful denominations of mothers, governesses, teachers, &c. &c. break into our dwellings,
and

and attack and mutilate our precious Rights before we have either the means or the leisure to contemplate and enjoy them !

We also, as well as boys, have natural, unalienable, and perfect rights.

To me it seems clear, that girls have a natural, unalienable, and perfect right to do what they like. Every thing like restraint is a fetter, every thing like advice or instruction, specious as it may seem, is but in reality aristocratic tyranny. At this period, when universal liberty is roused, all fetters must be broken, all aristocratic distinctions must cease, and all tyrants perish. From this great energetic rule of action, the doing simply as we like, the only character of true freedom, there are many plain deductions, which Mrs. Woolstoncroft has placed entirely in a new point of view. Innocence, she remarks, is but a civil term for weakness, and so it certainly is. There is no sexual character, she says—no more there is, say I, Lætitia Lookabout. Why then immure in horrid, detestable

detestable boarding-schools the fairest ornaments of the Creation, compelling them to thump harpsichords till their poor fingers are fore, to poke over embroidery frames to the injury of their precious eyes, and to work till their heads ach; to dance—no, I will not say any thing against dancing, I like that well enough. The first idea should be to make us strong, robust, and hearty; and therefore we should be suffered to tear about, and run about, and ride about, and play about, as boys do. Dear Mrs. Woolstoncroft too says that there is no harm in loving scarlet coats; now, for my part, I always did love scarlet coats, and always shall. Why, says this great and learned lady, why should women be censured with petulant acrimony because they seem to have a passion for a scarlet coat? I was so delighted with this idea, that I never stopped to finish the sentence, but away I ran to shew it Lance. I shall not in this chapter descend to minute particulars; my spirit and goodwill must have been sufficiently apparent to justify the warmest hopes of what I can, and

of what I will perform for the good of the sex generally, and for the happiness of *Girl-kind* in particular. I will not, however, conclude, without conjuring all young women to revere the following animated lines of the poet as the truest, the wisest, and the wittiest, that ever were composed.

If girls or women go astray,
The stars are more in fault than they.

The stars I take to have a profound and subtle signification. For my part, I think it cannot possibly apply but to mothers, governesses, teachers, &c. &c. They are our good or evil stars. It is always their fault if we do wrong or be ever unhappy. I am satisfied that if girls were permitted without restraint to do from their childhood what they liked, they could not possibly go astray. And now, my dear girls and sisters, I leave these few unstudied hints to your deliberation; cousin Lance is impatient to begin again, and as he is so much more knowing than I am at present, though I shall soon be as knowing as he, for we are always together, I take my leave for the present.

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FARTHER SKETCHES OF THE RIGHTS OF BOYS.

PERSONS, as well as things, are of late years become so correctly both refined and defined, that it is no longer usual, and it would be certainly absurd, to use the expression of Westminster boy, Eton boy, Harrow boy, or the like. It is as customary, as it seems proper, to say a Westminster *man*, an Eton *man*, a Harrow *man*, &c. For what, I would ask, after all are *men*? Why, as the poet sings, Men are but children of a larger growth. Care should consequently be taken never to lose sight of this *manly* idea. The claims, therefore, become obvious, and the advantages innumerable. In the first place,

from this moment all flagellation must cease, it is a never-to-be-forgiven violation of the rights of *Boy-man*. At this moment a dawn of light breaks in upon me ; I hail, and follow it. I see an admirable opportunity of extending and improving the commerce of my country. Let us consider, with due abhorrence for a moment, what a vast and prodigious quantity of the produce of the *birch-tree* has been lavishly and uselessly consumed for the ignoble purpose of flagellation. Let Dr. Parr lay his hand upon his heart, if his conscience will let him, and ask himself how many thousands of waggon loads of this article he has thus cruelly misapplied. I say then that birch, which has hitherto been wasted for sanguinary and abominable purposes, may easily be rendered an agreeable article of home consumption, and an important one for foreign exportation. Birch wine, a most delicious and agreeable potation, may soon become a substitute for port ; and I cannot help expressing my surprise, that Adam Smith, in his elaborate treatise on the Wealth of Nations, has overlooked

looked this circumstance, which must doubtless be deemed a great defect in his otherwise excellent performance. The superfluous branches of this *popular* tree may be exported to the different nations of Europe. Carried to France, properly prepared in brooms, it may be made signally useful in cleaning the ways of that wise nation, at present perplexed, dirty, and impassable. To Norway and Sweden it may be sent to brush the snows from the mountains, and bartered in exchange for deal. I cannot, moreover, help thinking, that in the present state of America, if properly applied and distributed, it may produce lasting benefits in the *back settlements*. From all these collected motives I would recommend the establishment of a sect in imitation of the Antisaccharites, to be named the Antibirchites, who, I think, would more effectually, as well as more immediately, serve the cause of humanity. The foregoing the use of sugar can only meliorate the state of servitude in the West India islands remotely and partially; but the cultivation of birch, for the purposes above men-

tioned, would go with decisive progression to the accomplishment of its object. Lastly, as an additional enforcement of my argument, at once humane and patriotic, birch might also be converted into an article of fuel; thus gradually softening, and perhaps ultimately removing, the subterranean and hellish labours of our colliers in the mines. If this great reform should in consequence of my admonitions be adopted, I shall expect a portrait of myself with allegorical symbols to be painted at the public expence by the first of our artists. I shall farther presume that a subscription be opened for an engraving of this picture, after it shall have been first exhibited in a pavillion on the lawn before the Queen's house, and that I shall have the emoluments of the exhibition and as many proof prints as I shall choose to take.

But to return from this entertaining digression, for if the reader shall have but half the pleasure in perusing which I have had in writing it must be entertaining indeed.

Boys have a right to demand, that all those arbitrary and tyrannical instances of severity, denominated *Tasks*, be immediately abolished. Freedom scorns the word. *Task*,—where was the odious monosyllable created? Nature shudders at it. *Task*,—am I not a man, that is to say, a Westminster man, and shall I bear it? That great master of languages, Dr. Johnson, thus defines the horrid term, “Task is something to be done, imposed by another.” In conformity to which many of our vile Task-masters have condescended to soften it by the title of *imposition*. But are these days of light and liberty times for imposition? No, my friends, we will be imposed upon no longer.

It seems, therefore, both reasonable, expedient, and, indeed, necessary, that these Rights, which, as Dr. Price observed, should characterize Englishmen, belong in an equal degree to us, namely,

That we choose our own masters.

That we cashier them for misconduct.

That we form a government for ourselves.

These, said that great man, *supra dict.* are the fundamental rights of the people of England, of which people, Westminster men, Eton men, Harrow men, Winchester men, not to omit Hackney men, form no unimportant portion.

The propriety of our choosing our own master, seems hardly to admit of controversy. If right be power, power is right. We certainly have the right, and who will deny that we have the power? *Inde sequitur*, that we ought to choose our own masters.

The mode of cashiering masters for misconduct, such, for example, as contradicting the will of the majority, imposing wanton severities, obliging us to read many or improper books, must be a kind of public act, and what in great and public schools is usually, though absurdly, denominated rebellion.

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To the present most happy and most enlightened period this word has been applied in a vulgar, erroneous, and unjustifiable sense. In fact it means neither more nor less than revolution. Revolution means no more than the will of the majority ; thus discreetly and temperately explained, all harshness is completely done away.

Misconduct in masters is a conduct which does not, as I observed above, please the majority. Severity is misconduct ; presuming to judge what books we are to read, and at what time, is misconduct ; we must certainly be the properest judges of both. Refusing our requests for the remission of study is misconduct, &c. &c. Whenever, therefore, the majority shall determine, that there has been misconduct in masters, such masters ought to be cashiered ; that is, there exists a necessity for a revolution, that is again, conformably to the vulgar phrase, let us rebel.

Lastly, we have a right to form a government for ourselves. The expediency of this,
who,

who, that is not entirely lost to common sense and common justice, will pretend to dispute?

Having seriously perused the works of Plato and Aristotle, in ancient times, of Gavius and Bellendenus, in the middle ages, of Dr. Withers, Dr. Priestley, and the great Paine, in the present; I may venture, without any imputation of arrogance and presumption, to join a slight sketch of a proper government for *Boykind*, to be improved and extended hereafter, as occasion may demand.

The government of *Boykind* must comprehend business, relaxation, and discipline. To begin with the last first. Discipline can mean no more than the particular time, which, after a due deliberation amongst ourselves, the majority shall choose to set apart for the purpose of pursuing study. I should think that two hours in the day of three days in the week, must be fully adequate. When we consider what the exercises of health, such as cricket, trapball,

trapball, &c. the elegant accomplishments, boxing, for example, and the periods to require a taste in dress, must demand, two hours appear an ample allowance. And here I cannot but make honourable mention of an elegant feminary, not an hundred miles from London, the masters of which seem to have a fuitable idea of encouraging in boys a careful attention to the decoration of their persons. A bell rings every day an hour before dinner, at the sound of which every boy is expected to go to his room and employ this said hour in taking care of his hair, &c. &c. Boys so introduced can hardly fail of becoming hardy and manly characters.

Discipline also comprehends a period which has been usually set apart for prayer. That great and wise man, Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, has thrown wonderful light upon this perplexing subject. He is indisputably intitled to the warmest acknowledgments of all the boys, men I mean, of all public seminaries present and to come. What is so tender as

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conscience? In a matter of such serious importance as our conscience, ought we to be violently controuled? Forbid it all. To be dragged to church, or meeting, like felons to a jail, who can bear it? Surely, surely, we might be left to ourselves, and the impulse of our own mind. Will any candid individual for a minute entertain the smallest doubt, but that we should employ the hours which we are thus ignominiously compelled to waste in attendance on public worship, more like men, in pious meditations in our closet, in perusing the moral systems of the Heathen philosophers, and comparing them with the pure practical precepts of Christianity? In this instance the men of Hackney have proposed a noble example, worthy our careful imitation. It has, indeed, been foolishly insinuated, that Mr. Wakefield's book may do possible injury to the minds of youth; that young men are precipitate in catching hold of the shadows of pretence to be idle and licentious; and that public worship can do no harm, and is at least a restraint for

for a time. But this is stupid prejudice, and cannot apply to the more enlightened spirits of the young men of the present day. We will not, therefore, be *compelled* to attend public worship, that is, we will not attend it at all. And now to say something of a course of reading. Young men have hitherto been compelled to pursue a course of reading very ridiculous and useless. For example, the books most talked of by masters, and imposed upon scholars, have been Homer and Virgil. I should be glad to know what we can learn of life, that is of modern life, from either. In Homer, through which I was once obliged to labour, I remember nothing that at all resembles modern life, except, indeed, the episode of Menelaus and Helen, which the teachers of Winchester have most stupidly, and most tyrannically exterminated from their edition of this old poet. In Virgil also, if you take away the pleasant intrigue of Æneas with Dido, I really think there is nothing which will at all help a young man on in the world, or inspire him with ideas becoming

or advantageous. I would recommend then these two episodes to be separately printed for the use of schools. I would also recommend them to be ornamented with vignettes from the chaste pencil of Mr. Peters ; and I do not doubt but that on proper application, the elegant and accomplished Chamberlain of London would illustrate them with his invaluable annotations.

The above I recommend to the elder youths ; the lower classes I should presume will hardly require any thing which is not to be found in Ovid. Here let me not be misunderstood. I am considering only what the young men of the present day are, and what accomplishments are necessary for them to cut a figure in life. What are in general the officers of the Guards ? what are the charming youths who, with so much elegance and grace, parade the rooms of Pall Mall and St. James's Street ? As for your dull dogs, they may read what they please, I write not for them.

With

With respect to Ovid, it is a useful book ; I am sure I have found it so: but to make it yet more valuable, perhaps Miss Seward and Mr. Hayley, *quos honoris causa nomino*, might be induced, in conjunction, to prepare a new edition of this delightful writer, with congenial and various notes, adapted to the farther improvement of the youthful mind. So much for reading. As for relaxation, upon this article an entire volume might easily be written. Boys require, and may reasonably demand, a great deal of relaxation to sooth and soften the feverities of application. Upon this none can be expected to decide, I mean with respect to its repetition and duration, but boys themselves ; for who else are to benefit from the operation ? Like that immortal poet, Peter Pindar, who has a *devilish* knack of painting things, I would not put the axe to the root of the tree, but rather regulate its beauty ; yet I cannot help being of opinion, that in this particular of relaxation, Boykind may very properly and safely be left to determine

termine for itself. Upon these outlines other heads wiser than mine may work ; I am satisfied that I have done thus much of my duty. It is enough for me to have exhibited the rough diamond ; I leave it to be cut and polished as opportunity may provoke, and exigence demand. I now resign the pen to my dear Lætitia, whose congenial ardour for the improvement and happiness of Girlkind far exceeds my praise.

FARTHER SKETCHES OF THE RIGHTS OF GIRLS.

THERE can be no doubt in the world, I Letitia do in this respect entirely agree with Mrs Woolstoncroft; there can be no possible doubt, but that girls have hitherto been miserably ill managed. A speedy and effectual reform is undeniably expedient. Poor girls have indeed been sadly treated, and, instead of enjoying their natural, just, and necessary rights, have been shamefully degraded and cruelly depressed. A few of these grievances, and a few only, I shall endeavour to point out; they are too numerous for my time and too complicated for my talents; I shall therefore leave it to those of

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my sisterhood who have more leisure and wiser heads to discuss others, with their several remedies. In the first place, it is perfectly wrong, as Mrs. Woolstoncroft does not fail to observe, to shut up girls by themselves in schools. It would certainly be better to bring up boys and girls promiscuously together. If we were suffered to live from an early age with boys, we should not in general be so ignorant as we are ; we should certainly know a great many things which we now do not ; we should neither be so stupid, so sheepish, nor so silly ; we should be better able to live in the world, and to enter more profoundly into the constitution of things ; we should, in all probability, get married sooner, which must evidently tend to the increase of population ; and I am not such a gooscap as to be ignorant that population is all for the good of one's country. I have read of a custom which prevailed amongst the Lacedemonians, and a very wise one certainly it was. The young girls were accustomed to dance certain frolicksome dances before the young men, with their
cloaths

cloaths tucked up to their knees. Now I think this must have had a delightful effect. And I would recommend at least to have the experiment made, in Kensington gardens for example; where, if all our young ladies would make a point to assemble at stated periods, and dance before the young men with their cloaths tucked up to their *knees*, the consequence must be admirable. Then, indeed, it would be worth while to learn particular steps and attitudes from Slingsby, Noverre, and Gallini, whose fine talents, by the prevailing habit of our filthy petticoats, are in a great measure thrown away. But to say something of boarding-schools. When a poor girl goes to a boarding-school, the first thing to which she is compelled is to hold up her head and turn out her toes. For my own part, I cannot think that this is either right or perfectly modest, and am rather inclined, on serious reflection and much observation, to be an advocate for turning in the toes, and holding down the head. I give the following amongst an abundance of other good reasons, which I keep in reserve, if Mrs.

Montague, or Mrs. Carter, or Mrs. Barbauld, or any other of your disputative ladies, should think proper to enter the Lists with me. I aver, that turning in the toes is by far a more becoming and modest attitude than turning them out. I do not choose to say a great deal upon this delicate subject; and perhaps what I mean and feel might best be represented by two figures. A cone on its base may be considered as representing the toes turned in, Δ . This is a regular and handsome figure. Whereas the toes turned out can only be described by a cone reversed ∇ a most unnatural and hideous figure.

Which is the most elegant, the most becoming, or the most modest, I presume not to determine. Neither can I think it a mark of the highest wisdom to compel girls to hold up their heads. The art of holding up the head leaves the rest of the person, as it were, naked and defenceless, and we may suffer from rude and lawless attacks, before we see what is going forwards. Now there is a most obvious advantage in holding the head
down :

down : we see every part of the person ; and as women in general are so fond of looking at themselves, I am much astonished that a contrary custom should ever have prevailed. This position of the head has also another striking advantage ; we are qualified to become proficient in botany ; which the wisest men of the present day alledge to be a science peculiarly well adapted for women, at the same time increasing their health, and improving their minds. And here I must relate an anecdote. I once remember hearing a virgin aunt of mine remark with great glee, that it was a mighty pleasant thing to cull simples ; at which she, and a female friend who was with her, a lady of great experience, laughed most heartily. I childishly enquired what the expression of culling simples meant, and they told me it was a term in botany. This did not, however, entirely satisfy me ; and I took the first opportunity of asking cousin Lance, who told me it was a phrase amongst certain knowing ladies, to which they were exceedingly partial, for *imposing upon fools*.

But not to digress. Another custom in girls' schools, equally injurious and offensive, is that of bracing back the shoulders. What this can be for, I cannot imagine. The London poulterers, indeed, have a mode of trussing chickens, turkeys, &c. in a manner which shews the breast full and large. I cannot suppose that this motive can have introduced the custom I would reprobate ; but an abominable custom it is ; and I have often seen girls after coming out of their backboards move their arms most piteously up and down like the fins of a turtle. To me, therefore, it seems not only eligible, but a matter of right,

That girls should hold down their heads ;

Turn in their toes ;

And have their shoulders inclined forwards rather than backwards.

I take up a little more of my reader's time to make a few slight and cursory observations on the kind of work and course of reading
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suitable for girls. Work, indeed, after all, is but another word for servitude; and, thanks to the spirit of the times, there are to be no more slaves. I have been informed, that Dr. Priestley is going to write a letter to the Emperor of Morocco, insisting upon it, that immediately on the receipt of the said letter, he releases all the slaves within his dominions. If he refuses to comply, the Doctor proposes to publish a severe letter against him, in which he threatens to prove him a Trinitarian. I offer, therefore, the following reasons for not doing any work at all. This will, I hope and believe, make a suitable impression upon those who have, or may have, the superintendence of young women. Work is slavery, or at least a species of it; there ought to be no such thing as slavery.

Work, such as girls have hitherto bestowed their time and attention upon, is a sexual distinction; and as Mrs. Woolstoncroft most sapiently observes, there ought to be no sexual character or distinction. I wonder whether

the means that this should also extend to drefs; if ſhe does, I think a kind of middle way preſents itſelf, betwixt our looſe petticoats, and the men's tight breeches, namely, the Highland drefs. I think many of our fashionable women would look delightfully well in this Highland drefs. I know I ſhould like it vaſtly, for I am ſaid to have very good legs. It would therefore be but a proper compliment to the Rights of Women, that all the embroidery frames in the kingdom be publicly burned. Embroidery is a ſort of ariftoocratic employment, and ſhould by all means be aboliſhed. Tambour is of the ſame deſcription, and ſhould be treated accordingly. Think too what an immense revenue might be ſaved to the public by the abolition of the whole tribe of drawing-maſters, muſic-maſters, dancing-maſters, &c. Theſe idle drones of the political hive (I have ſeen that expreſſion ſomewhere, it is not mine, and I ſcorn to crib without telling,) might ſurely be employed in occupations more manly in themſelves, and more profitable to the ſtate.

And

And now for Reading, very little, indeed, of which will be sufficient; for the men, whom, after all, it is our interest to please, have long determined your learned ladies to be very odious things. Besides, with women, a very little reading will go a prodigious way. I once went with my aunt to a Blue stocking party. At first I was monstrously frightened; and expected, as I sat trembling in a corner, that I should in a moment be asked, how long I had learned Greek. But my alarm very speedily vanished, for I soon perceived that the various individuals of which the assembly was composed, might, perhaps, be eminent for their accomplishments, but they certainly were not for their affectation of them. They chatted harmlessly, as other people do, of the passing anecdotes of the day; and I left them in perfect good-humour, and entirely convinced that my prejudices against them were ill-founded, and that they were not the monsters I had apprehended. I have ingenuously described the Blue-stocking party to

she means that this should also extend to dress; if she does, I think a kind of middle way presents itself, betwixt our loose petticoats, and the men's tight breeches, namely, the Highland dress. I think many of our fashionable women would look delightfully well in this Highland dress. I know I should like it vastly, for I am said to have very good legs. It would therefore be but a proper compliment to the Rights of Women, that all the embroidery frames in the kingdom be publicly burned. Embroidery is a sort of aristocratic employment, and should by all means be abolished. Tambour is of the same description, and should be treated accordingly. Think too what an immense revenue might be saved to the public by the abolition of the whole tribe of drawing-masters, music-masters, dancing-masters, &c. These idle drones of the political hive (I have seen that expression somewhere, it is not mine, and I scorn to crib without telling,) might surely be employed in occupations more manly in themselves, and more profitable to the state.

And

And now for Reading, very little, indeed, of which will be sufficient; for the men, whom, after all, it is our interest to please, have long determined your learned ladies to be very odious things. Besides, with women, a very little reading will go a prodigious way. I once went with my aunt to a Blue stocking party. At first I was monstrously frightened; and expected, as I sat trembling in a corner, that I should in a moment be asked, how long I had learned Greek. But my alarm very speedily vanished, for I soon perceived that the various individuals of which the assembly was composed, might, perhaps, be eminent for their accomplishments, but they certainly were not for their affectation of them. They chatted harmlessly, as other people do, of the passing anecdotes of the day; and I left them in perfect good-humour, and entirely convinced that my prejudices against them were ill-founded, and that they were not the monsters I had apprehended. I have ingenuously described the Blue-stockings party to

which I was introduced; others there may be of a very different description, alike remarkable for their pertness, affectation, and pedantry. Now to return to reading.

It is unnecessary to say any thing about the Bible, Prayer Book, or books of devotion; ladies boarding-schools, it must be confessed, so far comply with the taste of the times, that these are very seldom put into the hands of their pupils. I have, indeed, heard of a lady of fashion, who had two daughters at a celebrated seminary, who stipulated with the governesses, that lady Charlotte, and lady Caroline, might not be suffered to read the Bible. Her reason was curious enough; she thought it contained some filthy words and indecent stories, which might tend to contaminate the minds of her daughters. I know of but two books more immediately deserving the attention of girls; one is in French (for we should know a little French),
one

one in English. These invaluable books contain all that is interesting in life, or of consequence in morals, inculcating the necessity, if we would be happy, of indulging youthful prosperity; these charming books are Fielding's Tom Jones, and Rousseau's Eloise.

Here for a short interval I suspend my pen.

SKETCH

SKETCH OF THE RIGHTS OF
BOYS OF THE PRIVILEGED
ORDERS.

WE will begin, by way of example, with the son of a Duke. To him I must by all means recommend a most circumstantial exaction of his Rights. A young Marquis will, in all probability, not be sent to a public school, at least this has not happened of late years. Not from any apprehension of contamination from vicious example, but that his proper dignity may not suffer, or be impaired by the gross and unbecoming familiarity of inferiors. This prejudice is justly founded in true wisdom, and for this reason it was that his present Grace of * * * * *, whose conduct I would recommend to the
careful

careful imitation of all those of equal rank, was abruptly removed from Westminster school.

His young Dukeship affronted a school-fellow: his school-fellow gave him a sound drubbing; his sagacious grandmama, jealous of the dignity of her house, considered this as a most vile and abominable degradation; she accordingly removed him in her wrath, and placed him with a private tutor. But to return. The first object and indispensable right of a young Marquis, is to have the command of as much gold as he chooses. I repeat the word gold; I am not entirely certain that it is consistent with his dignity to have much to do with silver; but for him ever to touch halfpence is very base, and utterly unworthy of his illustrious rank. A lord should never take halfpence, said lately a sage maiden aunt to her nephew, a young sprig of nobility, at a public school. The boy, eager enough to catch at such encouragements of his natural disposition, most minutely followed her advice.

His

His natural appetites, however, were much like those of other boys, and as well as they, and most likely as often, he wanted rolls, fruit, balls, &c. Thus he contrived to spend, the first week he was at school, twenty guineas, which were intended by his guardians for his pocket-money from holidays to holidays. But thus he managed it: whenever he bought a roll, he gave six-pence, and sometimes a shilling, because, forsooth, he was a lord, and his aunt had told him a lord should not carry halfpence in his pocket. It is hardly necessary to add, how much his little lordship was the delight and admiration of Poll Puff, Mother Freeland, Master Mouger, &c. who were all very eager to serve him, and united in the approbation of his noble spirit.

The next object with a young Marquis must be to have his tutor, whoever he may be, clergyman or layman, perfectly obsequious and obedient to his desires. He must insist upon going where he likes, doing what he likes, reading what he likes, and when

he likes, &c. &c. This, indeed, in all human probability, his lordship will find no difficult matter to accomplish. The tutors of noblemen are not often remarkable for severity or contradiction, and have generally a due and becoming sense of the rights of those entrusted to their care.

The next indispensable requisite, and, indeed, Right of a Young Nobleman, is to be exquisitely proud. This must uniformly be his prominent distinction; it must exhibit itself in his books, his gait, his voice, his manners, conversation, dress, &c. A nobleman without pride is no more than a common man. I said something of his gait, and here I would recommend him to study a graceful peculiarity. The courtiers of Alexander, from respectful compliment to their sovereign, endeavoured to walk with their right shoulders elevated; and, a levee in the court of Macedon must, indeed, have been a delightful spectacle. In like manner, as it is very probable that the left breast of the heir of a peerage may be ornamented with a
star,

star, I would recommend that proper pains be taken by those who may superintend a young nobleman's earlier years, to make him walk with his left breast advanced, and more prominent than the other, so that when hereafter his star shall shine auspicious, it may not seem to the gazing multitude entirely thrown away upon him. Let him take every opportunity of looking at the Earl of A———, who shews a star more and better than any of the princes of the blood, nay, more than majesty itself. But to say a few more words on the subject of pride. Probably a young nobleman may not have had leisure to read or learn so much as many of his inferiors in rank ; he will find pride, therefore, an admirable substitute for learning ; and he will do well and wisely to express, on all occasions, the most profound contempt for those who may have no other distinctions than the superficial accomplishments of scholars and learned men.

His behaviour to men in general must be regulated not by their virtues or their talents ;
these

these are beneath his notice by their comparative situations in life. Relaxing the studied austerity of countenance in gentle gradations of complacency, from a prince of the blood to the simple squire. And here I cannot propose to him a more noble pattern of imitation than a certain Anglo-Gallic Duke, whom in these libellous times I venture not more circumstantially to specify. It has been the study of this great man's life to fortify his visage with impregnable hardness, forming to himself fixed rules and degrees of graciousness accommodated to the rank of those with whom he communicates. He never speaks to a commoner, if he can decently avoid it; and, by a line of circumvallation, forbids the possible approach of all low-bred beings.

At a period when the people of Europe combine in regarding the more elevated orders of society with a jealous and suspicious attention, the necessity more obviously exists of exhibiting the true and ge-

D

nuine

nuine dignity of titles and honours, derived from a long line of illustrious ancestry. It becomes more immediately essential to vindicate the rights of such dignities, and to treat with proper scorn and contumely the observations of the baser Vulgar. It has indeed been remarked, that this jealousy of the subordinate ranks, this equalizing spirit which every day gains ground, should prompt opposite qualities, and direct a contrary mode of conduct. That they who enjoy elevation of rank, and the more extensive bounty of fortune, would do wisely by being courteous, generous, and benevolent, to prevent the interval which divides the Great from the Mean being too remarkable; that these are the only effectual means of providing for their permanent security, and that by thus seeming useful to the world they may obtain a kind of reverence both to their persons and stations. But these are very low and pusillanimous prejudices, which the heirs of peerages cannot treat with too much ridicule and contempt. Indeed, to say the truth, the noble
per-

personages for whose profit I write, want but little prompting on this head. Look, for example, at the illustrious Earl of B——e, with what generous and dignified scorn must he listen to such opinions! Look at the noble Earl of F——d, who has arrived at such skill in boxing, that he might have entered a Roman amphitheatre as the first of pugilists. In what can a peer of Britain obtain excellence so pure, or so enviable, as in the art of pugilism? Contemplate also with becoming veneration his Grace of Q———y. He, indeed, exhibits a proof how wise it is not to be misled by what is vulgarly termed virtue and discretion. Is the fire of youth exhausted in him? Do the deities of Bacchus and of Venus, though now arrived at the age of seventy-four, regard him with less auspicious influence? As to the esteem which he has obtained, is his name ever mentioned without exciting universal admiration?

I think it not expedient to take up much more of my reader's time. What I have here

laid down as demanding the attention and useful pursuit of the son of a Duke, applies, with certain modifications, to the younger branches of all the privileged orders. Boys have hitherto been depressed too much, and rudely obtruded from the place they ought to have in the scale of society. I trust that my affectionate admonitions will prompt within them a generous ardour for asserting their proper Rights, a determination of thinking for themselves, and of acting as the laws of right reason and nature warrant. The youthful mind, when unimpaired by laborious studies and reflection, uncontaminated by the taint of indurated prejudices, must be most of all capable of reflecting with accuracy and truth upon the nature of happiness itself, and on the means of obtaining it. Let solemn greybeards, from whom the opportunity is gone, and who are passed the means of indulging the warm and generous passions of the soul, dryly exclaim against the forward impertinence and temerity of youth!

Their

Their endeavours however exerted, to clog and embarrass the paths of pleasure and delight from the entrance of ingenuous youth, are base, insidious, and cruel. We must be the best judges of what will make us happy : their own cold reasoning allows that youth is the season for happiness ; the sooner then we begin to taste the delicious cup the better ; let us despise their suggestions, and obey the voice of Nature.

SKETCH OF THE RIGHTS OF
GIRLS OF THE PRIVILEGED
ORDERS.

WITH what a charming spirited dash has dear George concluded his last chapter ! He is a most delightful fellow, and uncommonly handsome. I have little more to do than to tread in his steps, to follow the path his pencil has marked out, and to shew young women, as he has the young men, how much wiser they may be, and how much happier they will be, by asserting their proper rights, by bursting those fetters which have so long held us in thralldom, whether imposed by parents, governors, or guardians.

It

It is my part, therefore, to give advice to the daughter of a Duke. The daughter of a Duke, what an illustrious fascinating situation ! how great would be my transports to be called My Lady Lætitia ! But even these exalted females, how my heart pities them ! From want first of knowing their Rights, and then from want of opportunity to assert them, they have hitherto been cruelly debarred from pursuing the innocent gratifications of their youth, and privileges of their rank, and have languished in ignorance, sorrow, and depression.

The very first thing which ought to occupy the imagination of the daughter of a Dutcheſs, is the probability of being married to a Duke. A Duke did I ſay ! who knows, conſidering how things are at preſent circumſtanced, but ſhe may win a Prince of the blood ? Such things have been, are, and will be. The rules, therefore, which George has laid down to be obſerved by a young

Marquis, apply with the least possible variation to the daughter of a Duke. She cannot too soon begin to rehearse the part of a Dutcheſs. Her air cannot be too ſtately, nor her mien too lofty. And here it ſeems pertinent enough to direct her attention to ſome of our more eminent female characters, that ſhe may the more eaſily learn what to avoid, and what to imitate.

The Dutcheſs of Hamilton diſgraces herſelf by what vulgar people call affability, but which in reality is the want of a proper ſenſe of her high dignity. The Dutcheſs of Devonſhire reads muſty books; and (would you believe it?) is ſo low and mean in her ideas as to make her children's cloaths.

The Dutcheſs of Leinſter has moſt abominably degraded herſelf by marrying her ſon's private tutor. The Dutcheſs of Rutland is a ſort of ambiguous character, who plays at hide and ſeek; ſometimes ſhe blazes in polite circles for a few months, in all the ſplendour

dour of rank, and pride of beauty ; then again she retires from the world, hiding her talents in a napkin, and nobody can tell what is become of her. No, the patterns I would propose to be closely copied, are her Grace of Marlborough, and the Dutchess of Richmond. These great personages have, indeed, an exalted idea of what constitutes real state and intrinsic dignity.

In what manner these young ladies must begin, so that they may in due time arrive at the perfection which distinguishes the above-mentioned illustrious ladies, must be something like what follows.

Her young Ladyship must from her infant years consider it as most excessively vulgar and degrading ever to touch pin or needle. She is never, on any account, to contribute the smallest assistance towards dressing or undressing herself. Before she rises she must recline elegantly in bed whilst her stockings are put on and her garters tied, as they say
 Lady

Lady Cardigan always did before she married. When she is helped from her bed she must stand firm and erect in her apartment, like the figure in a French milliner's chamber, loaded with the fashions of the day. She must *sloop* on no occasion whatever ; every thing must be brought to her.

As to learning, whatever this base expression comprehends, the choice must, doubtless, be left entirely to herself. She must never be thwarted or contradicted on any account, and must select teachers, servants, dresses, &c. as her own taste and partiality shall prompt. She must also begin as early as possible to have an extreme contempt for money, which she must consider as dirt : and what is it else ? Her dress must be in the highest degree costly, to prevent the possibility of vulgar imitation. At thirteen she must insist upon being introduced into company, for her Ladyship cannot be hid in the world, be too soon divested of the ridiculous sheepishness of the girl, or the viler *mauvaise honte*

honte of domesticity. As for the passions, a woman of real fashion ought, if she can accomplish it, to have none at all. Friendship is impracticable, and must militate with all her hopes and prospects. Friendship is a serious affection, and it is absurd to suppose that a woman of high rank and fashion should ever have serious thoughts. It is founded too on principle; and I think, that if we consider women in the elevated ranks of society, we shall find that they cut the greatest dash, excite more curiosity and attention, who have no principles at all. Friendship too implies confidence. Now the only individual upon earth, in whom a woman of high rank and fashion can properly place confidence, is herself. And now I should certainly say something of Love. Love is a sedentary employment, and therefore injures beauty. Love makes people sickly; it employs too much time; it imposes restraints upon the mind; it inspires terror; it makes people indecent, often jealous, often angry. To say every thing at once, love is unfashionable, and therefore beneath the dignity of a girl of high

high rank; by all means let them avoid this mad, intoxicating cup. The ideas of her rank ought to be ever predominant in her mind, seriously vindicated, and strenuously asserted on all possible occurrences, In this place, I cannot resist the inclination I have to render a proper tribute of praise to the Right Honourable the Countess of ———; who, at all times and places, is *amiably* conspicuous for her outward dignity of manners, her *visible signs* of elevated rank, her ingenuous pride of birth, and her proper and most unfeigned contempt of all low-born people. Of this most excellent and illustrious lady it has been said that she entertains so refined an idea of the contaminating and degrading nature of all commercial situations, that some of her poorer and dependent relations have been induced, by her interposition, to forego very lucrative prospects in business, that the honour of her family might receive no stain or imputation. This is a spirit truly worthy of English nobility. It has, indeed, been maliciously intimated by a certain popular writer, that the ancestors of this family,

ly, not many hundred years ago, were mercers ; but this is certainly invidious and false. I hasten to a conclusion of our first part ; yet one very important circumstance to be observed by all young women of rank, I had almost omitted. The more so, as cousin George has made no mention of it in his ingenious axioms. But certain it is, that the delicacy of a young female of exalted rank must never be shocked by any thing gross in the article of eating and drinking ; that is to say, when she dines in company, or from home ; at other times, and when she takes luncheon, the calls of nature and appetite may be complied with without humiliation or ceremony. And here I must relate a true story. I once heard a gay young man, heir to a title, greatly distress his poor dear delicate sister in a large company, most abominably indeed. The young lady, though a superb and magnificent dinner was before her, could be allured to eat nothing, but kept piddling with her fork over two or three delicacies which were forced upon her, and, in a most becoming

becoming manner, turned up her beautiful nose at others. The lady of the house, in a most polite and impressive manner, at length took notice that Lady Sophia had no appetite ; at which she expressed the politest regret in the most fashionable terms. " No," exclaimed her brother Frederick (a Westminster *man*), with the most intolerable rudeness, " how the deuce should she, when I saw her at three o'clock eat a pound of beef-steaks, and drink a pint of porter !"

But I see land. So anxious are George and I to communicate to our contemporaries the benefit of our observations and reflections, that here we are determined our first part shall terminate. In publishing our first part by itself, with the promise of a second soon to follow, we do but imitate the examples of the great and popular writers of the day. How would the world have languished in anxious, agonizing expectation ; how much solid information, useful discovery, and moral truth, would for a tedious interval have been
 been

been withheld from society, if the great Paine had not published in a detached form the *first part* of his invaluable Rights of Man ! The same may be said of the great author of a book called Advice to the Privileged Orders. And thou too, friend of our sex, respectable Woolstoncroft, (is not this very like Rousseau ?) what do we not owe to your affectionate eagerness to assist and improve us. May the second part of your truly chaste and valuable performance, hasten to be united to its first. Thus will mankind, woman-kind I mean, be aided by a plain and simple code of instruction ; in which all foolish prejudices are overturned ; and in which women are taught to regard with becoming scorn the means by which they have till now captivated, namely, softness of beauty, grace and elegance of manner, and the pursuit of more delicate employments.

These sketches we are resolved to pursue in a second part, when we shall have reason to suppose the youth of both sexes, for whose

permanent benefit these our labours are intended, shall appear to have paid them suitable attention. The proofs of this will be found from our settlement with our different publishers; and as soon we shall find that the twenty four thousand copies we have printed are sold, again we shall go to work. Speed the plough!



